

In re Feldbau et al.
Serial No. 08/981,461

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a1 is originated from the sender and comprising the contents of the information being electronically transmitted to said recipient, and said one or more information elements a2, . . . , an comprising dispatch-related information and comprise at least the following elements:

a2 - a time indication associated with said dispatch; and
a3 - information describing the destination of said dispatch,

and wherein at least said information element a2 is provided in a manner that is resistant to or indicative of tampering by either of said sender and said recipient;

an authenticator functioning as a non-interested third party with respect to the sender and the receiver and having

means for associating said dispatch-related information with said element a1 by generating authentication-information comprising a representation of at least said elements a1, a2 and a3, said representation comprising a set of one or more elements, each comprising a representation of one or more elements of said set A; and

means for securing at least part of said authentication-information against tampering of [at least] said sender and recipient.

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11 75. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 64, wherein the apparatus is combined in whole or in part with said dispatcher [and comprising at least part of said dispatcher].

94. (Amended) A method for authenticating that certain information has been transmitted from a sender via a dispatcher to a recipient, comprising the steps of:

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 providing a set A comprising a plurality of information elements a₁, . . . , a_n, where said information element a₁ is originated from the sender and comprising the contents of the information being electronically transmitted to said recipient, and said one or more information elements a₂, . . . , a_n comprising dispatch-related information and comprise at least the following elements:

 a₂ - a time indication associated with said dispatch; and
 a₃ - information describing the destination of said dispatch,

and wherein at least said information element a₂ is provided in a manner that is resistant to or indicative of tampering by either of said sender and said recipient;

 associating, by an authenticator functioning as a non-interested third party with respect to the sender and the recipient, said dispatch-related information with said element a₁ by generating authentication-information comprising a representation of at least said elements a₁, a₂ and a₃, said representation comprising a set of one or more elements, each comprising a representation of one or more elements of said set A; and

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cont securing, by said authenticator, at least part of said authentication-information against tampering of [at least] said sender and recipient.

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125. (Amended) A method of authenticating a dispatch and contents of the dispatch transmitted from a sender to a recipient, comprising the steps of:

receiving content data representative of the contents of the dispatch originated from the sender and being electrically transmitted to said recipient, and a destination of the dispatch;

providing an indicia relating to a time of transmission of the dispatch, said time related indicia being provided in a manner resistant to or indicative of tampering by either of the sender and the recipient;

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associating, by an authenticator functioning as a non-interested third party with respect to the sender and the recipient, the content data with dispatch record data which includes at least said time related indicia and an indicia relating to the destination of the dispatch, to generate authentication data which authenticate the dispatch and the contents of the dispatch; and

securing, by said authenticator, at least part of the authentication data against tampering of [at least] the sender and the recipient.

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~~137. (Amended) An authenticator for authenticating a dispatch and contents of the dispatch transmitted by or for a sender from a transmitting system to a receiving system for a recipient via an electronic communication network, comprising:~~

~~an input unit coupled to the communication network or to the transmitting system for receiving content data representative of the contents of the dispatch being electronically transmitted to said receiving system, and a destination of the dispatch;~~

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means for providing an indicia relating to a time of transmission of the dispatch, said time related indicia being provided in a manner resistant to or indicative of tampering by either of the sender and the recipient;~~

~~a processor for associating the content data with dispatching record data which includes at least said time related indicia and an indicia relating to the destination of the dispatcher and the contents of the dispatch; and~~

~~means for securing at least part of the authentication data against tampering of [at least] the sender and the recipient, the authenticator functioning as a non-interested third party with respect to the sender and the recipient.~~

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~~149. (Amended) An information dispatch system in an electronic communication network comprising;~~

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a source transmitting system coupled to the electronic communicating network for sending a dispatch from a sender to a recipient;~~

a destination receiving system coupled to the electronic communication network for receiving the dispatch for the recipient; and

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an authenticator functioning as a non-interested third party with respect to the sender and the recipient for authenticating the dispatch and contents of the dispatch transmitted from the source transmitting system to the destination receiving system, including:

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an input unit coupled to the communication network or to the source transmitting system for receiving content data representative of the contents of the dispatch being electronically transmitted to said destination receiving system, and a destination of the dispatch;

means for providing an indicia relating to a time of transmission of the dispatch, said time related indicia being provided in a manner resistant to or indicative of tampering by either of the sender and the recipient;

a processor for associating the content data with dispatch record data which includes at least said time related indicia and an indicia relating to the destination of the dispatch, to generate authentication data which authenticate the dispatch and the contents of the dispatch; and

means for securing at least part of the authentication data against tampering of [at least] the sender and the recipient.

158. (Amended) A method of authenticating a dispatch and contents of the dispatch from a sender to a recipient, comprising the steps of:

C1 electronically receiving content data representative of the contents of the dispatch originated from the sender, and a destination of the dispatch;

generating a paper document printout of said electronic content data to be dispatched to said recipient via a selected manual delivery service;

providing an indicia relating to a time of the dispatch, said time related indicia being provided in a manner resistant to or indicative of tampering by either of the sender and the recipient;

associating, by an authenticator functioning as a non-interested third party with respect to the sender and the recipient, the content data with dispatch record data which includes at least said time related indicia and an indicia relating to the destination of the dispatch, to generate authentication data which authenticate the dispatch and the contents of the dispatch; and

securing, by said authenticator, at least part of the authentication data against tampering of [at least] the sender and the recipient.

159. (Amended) A certificate for attesting a dispatch and contents of the dispatch, comprising a representation of the following authentication data:

content data representative of the contents of a dispatch being electronically transmitted by a sender to a recipient; and

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dispatch record data which includes at least an indicia relating to the destination of the dispatch, said time related indicia being provided in a manner resistant to or indicative of tampering by either of the sender and the recipient, and at least part of said authentication data being secured against tampering of [at least] the sender and the recipient, wherein the authentication data are generated and secured by an authenticator functioning as a non-interested third party with respect to the sender and the recipient.

160. (Amended) A method for verifying the authenticity of either of the contents, the time and the destination relating to a dispatch from a sender to a recipient, comprising the steps of:

providing a representation of either of said information elements;

verifying said representation for match with a representation of at least part of authentication data, said authentication data generated by an authenticator functioning as a non-interested third party with respect to the sender and the recipient and comprising a representation of the following information element: content data representative of the contents

of the dispatch being electronically transmitted by the sender,
~~and dispatch record data which includes at least an indicia
relating to a time of the dispatch and an indicia relating to the
destination of the dispatch, said time related indicia being
provided in a manner resistant to or indicative of tampering by
either of the sender and the recipient, and said authentication
data being secured against tampering of [at least] the sender and
the recipient.~~

. REMARKS

The Office Action to which this Amendment is responsive has been carefully considered along with the references cited therein. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance.

The present invention is directed to a comprehensive solution for a sender of a dispatch to address the evidentiary questions regarding the dispatch: what information has been sent, to whom, and when, without requiring the recipient's cooperation. The dispatched information may take one of a variety of forms, such as a conventional paper document, an electronic message, etc., and the delivery may be by a conventional courier, an electronic transmission over a network, or other methods. The method and system of the invention provides a convenient and reliable way to authenticate not only when, how, and to whom the dispatch was delivered, but also the contents of the dispatch.